

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph on page 2, lines 1-24, with the following amended paragraph:

In many current tapes the end hook portion extends below the base of the tape casing. This leaves the end hook vulnerable to damage, and consequent loss of accuracy, if dropped. This also leads to the hook portion becoming unintentionally caught on an object and extending the blade from the casing. In most other current tapes the hook portion does not extend a great distance from the measuring blade. Although this avoids some of the mentioned problems, this structure, however, presents its own problem, in that it is difficult to extend the blade from the casing by hooking the hook portion over the end of the workpiece when the measuring blade is fully spooled, as the small part of the hook portion which extends below the bottom edge of the casing is not sufficient to provide a firm grip on the end of the workpiece. If the user is holding the tape measure in one hand, and for example, holding the workpiece in the other hand, they would have to resort to other means for ~~rescinding~~ extending the blade from the casing. Many users achieve this by gripping the hook portion in their teeth and pulling the end piece away from the casing, thus extending the blade, before applying the brake to the blade, and transferring the tape to the workpiece, all this before continuing with the measuring process.